



## Royal London presents **Lost for Words**

I feel like I didn't know how to deal with it at all, because I wasn't meant to feel grief. It was like I didn't feel entitled to it. He's not my father, I'm an Irish man abroad and he's back there and I don't see him as much as I should. But, yet, it ran me over like a train.

I took an awful long time trying to understand why did I think there were loads of rules to grief? I think some of it is masculinity and machismo, showing weakness. Even in the more evolved idea of what we have of masculinity now, I didn't feel like I had a green light to feel what I was feeling, so, I kind of beat myself up over feeling it.

You know, parents say this to you, it could be an awful lot worse. That doesn't make what you're in any less bad, knowing that there's other people that have it worse than you.

Look, I fully believe that a lot of this is self-protection. It's a miscued belief that, by not talking about it, you can prevent the hurt from coming in. Whereas, anybody that's done anything in their life knows that you reach the hard bit, you push through the hard bit and on the other side's the good stuff. That goes for athletes, artists, builders.

The prevailing sense that really kills you is that nobody cares. That funeral was last week. And that "this is it" sense is part of the grief, because it's the recognition of the finality and how much things move on. You're as much grieving the loss of this person as you are your loss of the idea that death matters...and that this is gonna matter when it ends.

Walking under ladders, touch wood, salt over the shoulder. If you grew up in any kind of a superstitious culture...there is nothing you can do that is worse luck than to talk about death, talk about the dead, make jokes about death. It is our job, as comedians, to take dark things and introduce light. And, yet, this is the one that, like, you just can't go near. I've seen it done really well. And any time I've done shows that were about risk of death in



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the case of my brother and myself when I donated a kidney to him, it reverberates with people in a way like nothing else, because these are the things that we've been told we're not to talk about, when, in fact, you know, silence - it doesn't serve anyone.

The dead person isn't pissed off you're talking about them. They might be pissed off you're not. [LAUGHS] I'd certainly like people to talk about me when I'm gone.